

Message Text

SECRET

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12

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-03 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

SS-15 NSC-05 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 DODE-00 PRS-01

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FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2105

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON IMMEDIATE NIACT

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

CINCPAC

AMEMBASSY LONDON

S E C R E T SINGAPORE 0907

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, MPOL, AS, NZ, SN, UK

SUBJECT: USN ACCESS TO STORES BASIN AND FUEL DEPOT IN SINGAPORE

REF: WELLINGTON 0568

1. WE SHARE WELLINGTON'S CONCERN OVER STORY BY BRUCE KOHN ON ABOVE SUBJECT. IT IS, OF COURSE, GROSSLY INACCURATE BUT THERE IS ENOUGH TRUTH IN IT TO MAKE IT CREDITABLE IN SOME QUARTERS AND POTENTIALLY DAMAGING TO OUR INTERESTS. UNTIL GUIDANCE RECEIVED FROM DEPARTMENT, WE WILL ANSWER ANY PRESS QUERIES WITH "NO COMMENT."

END SECRET

2. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED: IF DEPARTMENT OR EMBASSY QUERIED, WE SUGGEST RESPONSE BE ALONG FOLLOWING LINES:

USN HAS FOR SEVERAL YEARS USED SINGAPORE AS PORT OF CALL FOR SHORE LEAVE, SHIP REPAIR AND BUNKERING. USE HAS BEEN MADE OF NAVAL STORES BASIN AND SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT-OWNED SEMBAWANG SHIPYARD AS WELL AS

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VARIETY COMMERCIAL FACILITIES. LAST YEAR THE NUMBER OF U.S. NAVAL

SHIPS CALLING AT SINGAPORE DECREASED APPRECIABLY FROM PREVIOUS YEARS AND WE DO NOT RPT NOT ENVISAGE ANY SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN FREQUENCY OF VISITS IN FORESEEABLE FUTURE. WITH THE WITHDRAWAL OF BRITISH MILITARY FORCES IN SINGAPORE, NEW ARRANGEMENTS WILL HAVE TO BE MADE FOR CONTROL OF CERTAIN FACILITIES FORMERLY UNDER ANZUK (AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, UK) CONTROL. THIS MATTER WILL BE DECIDED BY GOVERNMENT OF SINGAPORE IN CONSULTATION WITH ANZUK GOVERNMENTS. AND WE, OF COURSE, HAVE KEPT OURSELVES INFORMED. WHATEVER ARRANGEMENTS ARE MADE, WE HOPE THE USN WILL BE ABLE TO CONTINUE USING SINGAPORE AS A PORT OF CALL--AS IT HAS FOR SEVERAL YEARS. END UNCLASSIFIED.

3. BEGIN SECRET: WE THINK IT MIGHT BE ADVISABLE, IN VIEW OF KOHN STORY, FOR ME TO HAVE INFORMAL TALK WITH DEFENSE MINISTER GOH AND TO TELL HIM IN GENERAL TERMS OF OUR INTEREST IN MAINTAINING ACCESS TO STORES BASIN AND FUEL DEPOT. PRESUMABLY THEY ARE AWARE OF KOHN STORY AND MY PURPOSE WOULD BE TO REASSURE HIM THAT WE DON'T HAVE ANY GRANDIOUSE PLANS INVOLVING SINGAPORE AND THAT ESSENTIALLY WHAT WE HOPE CAN BE WORKED OUT IS A MEANS OF CONTINUING OUR PRESENT ACCESS (AUGMENTED SOMEWHAT IN CASE OF FUEL DEPOT) BUT NOT TO ENGAGE IN ANY NEW TYPE OF ORIGINIFICANTLY INCREASED OPERATION. I WOULD, OF COURSE, CONSULT WITH NEW ZEALAND HIGH COMMISSIONER BEFORE APPROACHING GOS. REQUEST AUTHORIZATION SOONEST. END SECRET. CRONK

SECRET

NNN

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